

LIFE STORIES OF WOMEN IN RAPANUI SOCIETY IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. GENDER STUDIES, PART 3

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INTRODUCTION

People's lives and their social and economic activities are influenced by the environment that, along with history and culture, has determined its structure. Generally, what has been written about the people of Rapa Nui has been written and interpreted by persons with an outsider's perspective. This has frequently created an erroneous view of what the roles of men and women were in reality. Thus direct work with informants is important for it gathers their impressions and their own perceptions of their roles in their own society. It must also be taken into consideration that "in general, each individual does not directly represent the whole of society, he represents it through his immediate social context, and through restricted groups of which he is a member" (Ferrarotti, in Pujadas 1992:11).

On Easter Island we have some idea of how life was in the past by being acquainted with traditions, transmitted through legends, myths, and the life stories that have managed to survive in memory and been passed on from generation to generation.

Although the stories differ in some of their parts, the essential aspects remain unchanged.

At the beginning of the century, according to a census conducted in 1918, a total of 268 persons were living on the island (Estella 1921:60). Even in such a small universe as Easter Island, where one would think that the retelling of the past would have certain uniformity, different versions of a single episode exist depending on an individual's tribal origin. That is, people who have a different tradition of territorial settlement, have ancestors and life episodes proper to the groups they are descended from. By the twentieth century, we can say that the differences arose through belonging to a particular family; although the families see themselves as part of a community and share a common tradition, they differ in certain patterns of behavior.

In order to determine the societal role of individuals at the beginning of the 20th century, nine persons with an average age of seventy were interviewed. They were selected on the basis of their belonging to different families, as well as their willingness to communicate their experiences.

Of the total, three women and two men were interviewed in greater depth due to their exhibiting a keen interest in communicating and sharing their life experiences which, however, initially seemed to have been forgotten. There were interesting sessions with three other females and one male. However, because of working difficulties, an inability to maintain a prolonged conversation due to personal idiosyncrasy, or having to dedicate an extended amount of time with them, the interviews were not conducted in greater depth.

Although five life stories are not a universe, the short interviews reaffirmed some aspects being studied, as well as bringing up other very valuable elements which, despite the fact that they did not correspond with the main theme, were recorded for posterity. This leaves open the possibility of working with the same informants in future sessions. While the

interviews provide us with interesting information, there is no way that we can draw absolute conclusions, but only form certain visions, sometimes coincident, sometimes dissimilar, of a period in Rapanui history.

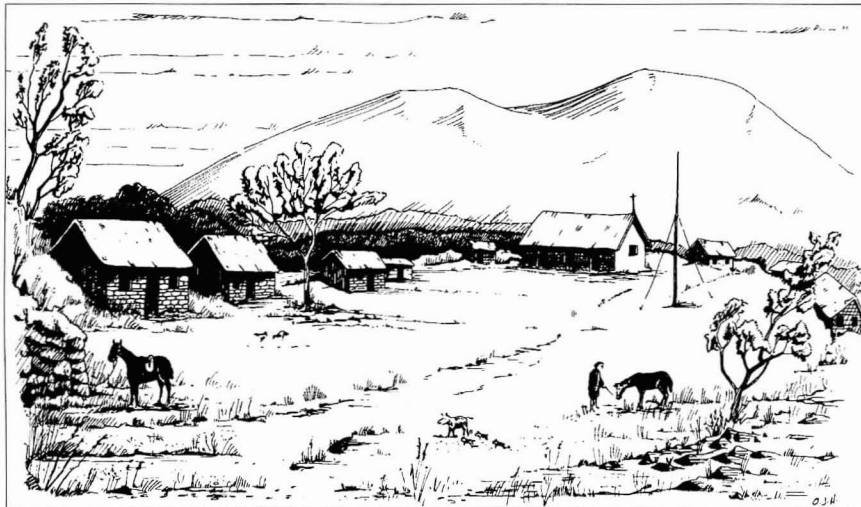
In the interviews, the biographic method was applied; not only were the stories of the daily life of those interviewed recorded, but also the critical moments of their lives, their childhood, their loves, the

death of family members, and their frustrations.

The experience acquired during twenty years of living with the Rapanui community provided a greater predisposition to understand the infinity of situations and names that kept appearing in the stories and to achieve a more fluent conversation and lasting interaction with the informants.

Perhaps for some it has been a requirement that the interviewer maintain his distance from the interviewee, with a focus on social events as mere data, that is to say a so-called objective or positivistic view, but in reality:

The observer is radically implied in the investigation, that is to say, in the field of his investigated object, knowledge does not have the other as its object; on the contrary, it consists of the inextricable and reciprocal interaction that exists between the observer and the observed. It is a matter of shared



Hangaroa village in 1916 (from J. D. Porteous 1981:19:153).

mutual knowledge, based on the inter-subjectivity of the interaction, a knowledge deeper and more objective the more it is integrally and intimately subjective (Ferrarotti, in Pujadas, 1992:10).

Thus, the interviews were conducted through dialogs and open-ended questions, with few guidelines directing the informants to give clear answers. In conjunction with the taping of the sessions, notes were taken on certain situations that occurred at various times in the work setting where a spontaneous conversation would crop up, such as an unforeseen encounter.

The interviews were conducted in 1997 in Spanish but, in many instances, expressions in the Rapanui language were introduced. The respondents' use of Spanish has its peculiarities that were transcribed word-for-word from the recordings; only identifying names were deleted.

The majority of the interviews were conducted in the homes of the subjects, as this was more comfortable for them. In the case of two persons, one lived far away and took advantage of a trip into town to have coffee and chat, and the other did not have enough peace and quiet at home. One of the women interviewed asked that she be given her own cassettes so that she could pass them on to her son at some time in the future.

Each session was carried out in a homelike environment where certain foods preferred by the interviewee were shared and, on many occasions, foods considered desirable were brought as gifts. This situation created a more pleasant environment so that other members of the family sometimes joined in order to listen to the stories told by the informant. At the start of every session, what had been said in the previous session would be recalled so that the storytellers would not repeat the same episode, although this sometimes failed to keep them from doing so. For this reason, the life stories are not presented in their entirety, but excerpted in order to support the previous data. The participants remain anonymous.

A VIEW OF THE PERIOD

The compiled life stories span the years between 1919 and 1966, the year that the island stopped depending on the Chilean Navy and was incorporated administratively into the national territory with the enactment of Law 16.441. This meant, among other things, the incorporation of public services and involved the arrival of continental functionaries and their families, accelerating change in the way of life of the islanders.

The lives of the people interviewed developed during the period of the William Balfour Company,² which determined the system of work of the islanders, as all worked for them directly or indirectly. Those who did not work in jobs related to the Company, such as the care of the animals, the shearing, or domestic work in the managers' houses, dedicated their time to the production of corn and other products that they sold to the company. The families continued raising their traditional crops, such as bananas, sweet potatoes, taro, sugarcane, and tending their own animals, especially cows, which provided milk. Fishing was another means of subsistence, as were the eggs and birds of the *motu* across from Rano Kau, nearby rocky islets that, although difficult to reach, provided a delicacy highly prized by many. The chicken in the traditional period continued

to be used as food and also in certain very special rituals.

Back then, this is how I live my life, working to live. Sometimes I go with my father in the boat to the *motu* to look for *mamari* (eggs), birds, fish; my dad would go fishing and . . . return home with my older brother, and work in the field planting sweet potatoes and corn because back then, we all have to work planting corn to take to the company. Back then, we have that work here in the island; we support the island with that work; there is no lack of work. We raise a pig and take it to the company to sell, and that is how we all live." (Male)

We got light with lamb grease. Every day my grandmother would cook sweet potatoes in an earth oven, and my grandfather went to get *nanue* fish and lobster. He put three or four lobsters in a bag and returned. When he left to go fishing he tells my grandmother, 'Get the earth oven ready for the sweet potatoes because at a certain time I am going to come out with a fish or a lobster.' My grandfather did not take us to fish; he did not want to teach things that they knew. He also went to the *motu*, and there he gathered the birds' eggs and the baby birds, too. They were delicious. When he arrived, my grandmother put the eggs in water and set about to cook, and then we ate. My grandmother's name is Magdalena and my grandfather's Timoteo. My grandmother got up early because the two of them had already discussed the night before what they would do the next day. The following day, he went fishing and brought this and that, and not even grandmother got up early; we were sleeping and he went out, right there below the cave, next to the stone fence, there were sweet potatoes planted right there. He went out and picked sweet potatoes. Later, he had a cow for milking, and then we drank milk, but José did not want to drink cow's milk, he wanted to drink goat milk. (Female)

Once a year, the Navy ship came to the island. One informant can recall the *Baquedano* and the company's ship, which brought cloth, pants, flour, sugar, crackers, canvas shoes, blankets, etc.; articles that were being introduced in daily life and then became desirable and indispensable.

The arrival of woven cloth involved learning to sew, which was taught preferably to women during the period of the government representative Exequiel Acuña, who also served as director of the school. His wife taught many women to sew, which is remembered today. The women made use of their creativity to make different kinds of clothes, taking advantage of even the sailors' capes to make skirts, which they showed off Sundays at church.

In general, since the eighteenth century, fabrics aroused the interest of the population and became a valuable item. On Sundays, the church came to be a place where one could display one's clothing, such as hats, which were very scarce at that time. The shearing activities, which took place during the months of October and November in the Vaitea area, toward the interior of the island where most of the company's outbuildings were located, brought together the whole

population, adults and children, the latter being brought along with their families, and the older children helping with various chores. The school registers contain the following entry: "Classes suspended for the shearing." (School Register, 1938)

When I was big, at the time of the shearing, I, too, went to work in the shearing, to sweep, to bundle the wool, another year to gather wool, also to tie the wool together. There was a lot of work to do there at that time of the shearing, and many people went to work there, and I went there, too. Then, on Saturday, I went to Mataverí to work for half a day; people stopped at mid-day, after lunch, and went to town and to Mataverí to get paid, and there they bought many things; they bought blankets, sheets, canvas shoes, crackers, flour, sugar, and things like that. They got everything there. (Male)

The work of the women in Vaitea was to gather the wool that was left on the ground, as well as cook for all the people who worked there. But generally, the work of the women tended to take place in the area of Mataverí, where they cleaned and cooked. They would travel with their children to work, spending practically the whole day there, until five o'clock in the afternoon. The company allowed the children to be fed there, at the place where the women worked.

I was nineteen years old, it seems, when I went to work at the company. They paid me 30,000 pesos a month. I used to go to the store to buy things. I bought shoes, clothes, fabric, because this time they did not bring ready-made clothes; they brought only fabric, but very pretty cloth in white, blue, pink. I used to buy fabric and take it to Mrs. Carmela, and paid her half, so she could make me a dress. I worked five years with the boss. I served the food. I would sleep there, had a room, a bed, all my things there because you had to serve at night. Sometimes people came with family, but the boss who lived with us had no family, just the two of them, that's all. The boss went to Vaitea to shear all the sheep there, and the Mrs stayed alone with me and the cook. They were good. Later, when she was ready to go away, she found out that I was upset and said, 'I'm going to leave you, I'm going away.' 'Where are you going to?' I said. 'I'm going to England. And you, do you want to go?' I did not want to answer; I said nothing. She told me: 'When you get bored, I'll bring you back. I'll give you three months to think it over.' After three months she asked me one last time: 'Shall we go?' I refused to answer. On the last day the ship was going to go, I was going with her to the dock, and she said to me: 'And shall we go?' I told her: 'No. I am afraid of the ship; it will sink in the sea there, and the fishes are going to eat me.' It was a lie, I did not want to go. After that, I worked at the company with Aunt Avelina; she went with all the children. I went along in the morning and I gave everyone milk because we always had milk and I went walking with everybody toward Mataverí. We got there, lit a fire and made some bread. At five o'clock

in the afternoon we finished and we came back. (Female)

And so life went on for the women, relegated to the town of Hanga Roa, because the rest of the island was off limits to them by stone fences with doorways that led to enclosures for herding the animals. It was generally the men who requested permission from the company's administrator to cross these areas in order to go fishing at various locations on the coast. During a drought (generally in the summer) women and children were also authorized to climb the volcano Rano Kau, where they went down to wash clothes in the crater lake. Today, women as well as men remember the joy of going to the volcano, and spending the whole day playing, the women washing, drying the clothes on the rocks, and chatting.

Water was always a potential problem. With the arrival of the Company, the construction of pits to catch rainwater was initiated, but sometimes even this water ran out, necessitating the use of water from the craters of volcanoes, and from the sweet water springs in the coastal zone.

We had water problems here at home. Many times we left the house at two in the morning, or three, coming from the house over there all the way over to Puna Pau; there is a well there, maybe you know of it, a little bit toward this side, now they planted figs there, and a fig tree is growing there. That water never ran out, but you went there and you took the water real slow, and you filled up and took it home. But there are bad people who came there and took the water and put food there to dirty the water. And the children went there to fetch water for coffee, and there was no water. . . Ah, life was so much. . . everything now same as before, it just keeps going around. A nun who came some time back, she came here twenty years ago, Sister Concepción, told me now the island has everything, but it can't be so. Before there was no electricity, there was no water, there was no sugar, there was no flour. Now all this happened, and we don't have *maika* here, sweet potato and everything we had plenty of before, now we don't have any more. Things just shift around; what was up is down, and what was down is up now, so she says. (Male)

It is clear that although many things that are now indispensable did not exist then, people never lacked food or water; the problems were never without solution since there were resources, even if far from home. People were used to this situation.

Those who suffered the most under this system of territorial banishment were the elders, who had experienced the freedom to go anywhere on the island, even with the problems that already existed by the middle of the nineteenth century, which meant, on many occasions, conflicts with outsiders who had occupied the island for their own purposes, and who destroyed, on more than one occasion, the islanders' plantations.

Those who were born during the years of Company rule adapted to the system, and for the most part felt that they lived well despite the frequently severe actions of the government's representatives.

When the Company was here, people lived very well. How? Not in the sense of progress, but in lifestyle and food. For instance, the Company had a store. They brought fabric to sell to people; they brought sugar, that dark kind; they brought flour; they brought coffee; they brought tea—the good-quality stuff. I'm talking about tea, about the kind of coffee in beans; sometimes it comes already ground. We got a sack of coffee beans; we got a sack of ground coffee. And the tea: we would get these tea leaves that the English use. It was delicious! I remember that mixing it with milk gave it such a different fragrance and taste. That is why I am now drinking *mojado* (tea made from leaves); because I remember those days. When I was in Vaitea, my mom used to make coffee with milk or tea with milk. Damn that's great! I remember having *sopaipilla* with it.

The Company maintained the island very well. Lamb at that time, it cost the company three pesos to sell it to people... I didn't work for the Company then, but I grew corn and that way I had money to buy things and buy at the store, and all the things were inexpensive and fabric, too. So then, the difference is now; I believe that food was better during the time of the company because now we have a lot of progress, but people are going hungry. There are families around here who have nothing more than coffee. And in the old days, people left their houses unlocked, and nobody bothered anything; their house was left alone all day because everybody went out. What little house they have there, they go work in the country and they come back and the house is just as they left it because no family wants to mess with any other family or do any wrong because they had all they need, the whole family worked, worked on the land, raised sweet potatoes, taro, sugar cane, everything, corn, all those things. There was no poverty, no hunger, nobody, even if they did not work for the company, because you had all you needed, because lamb you could buy Monday to Saturday. Imagine three pesos for a lamb, you could eat for two or three days, then come back and buy some more; and if you ate it all in one day, you could come back and buy more because they had lamb all week long. They had it to sell to people. In the case of fishing and all that, they ate fish, *curanto* [food cooked in an earth oven]. I tell you, nobody goes hungry; and they grew sweet corn and people ate well. They used to make *mote* [corn mush]; I remember that they did not know how to make *mote*, but when the exiles came here, we here in the island learned how because the exiles made *mote*. When the Williamson Company went away from here, the island went down; it went down. I was working at the Ministry of the Navy when they left. I just happened to be there in '50 when we moved the Ministry to Mataverí. Comandante Salazar was there. I worked there until around '59 for the Ministry of the Navy; worked fourteen years. I lacked nothing; there was everything here, for in-

stance, we never went without food.

Let's say that same person, A. C., he's the biggest thief there ever was. I remember this much: for a while, I got into it, too. I went robbing, too, but at 19 years, I said no. That is a bad thing and there. . . He was taking from people, so I said, 'That is a bad thing because there is no need. What for? Why am I going to go stealing?' That is when I gave it all up. That is just what I said: people have will power to control things because there is no one who does not have will power." (Male)

Although the feeling of the period was positive in regards to material resources, the impression was not the same with respect to those who occupied the government posts or were government representatives; they implemented a policy that was paternalistic as well as authoritarian.

My dad told the governor not to enslave the people because the days of slavery and of hitting people were over already. That is what my momma used to tell me, that they used to hit the people and my dad defended them. And he said, 'There is no reason to hit people because the days of slavery have passed, and if I happen to go to Santiago, I am going to let them know about all this.' And then, the governor resented my dad, and my dad suffered from asthma, from the disease of asthma. And my dad was worn out from asthma, and he sent for medicine requesting it from the governor because he had the asthma medicine and takes care of that sort of thing. So, they got the medicine for asthma, and added carbolio acid, and my dad took it and died. The governor himself gave him arsenic. The governor at that time was Acuña, I don't know for how long. Acuña, was his name, Exequiel Acuña, the *Vere oru* [bearded pig]. (Male)

Acuña hits the children. He made a kind of round thing up there for all the children, and he let them go up to it on a ladder on that thing. And when it moved downward, it ran like so; and there were children up on it, and he was down below looking like this, and the children, sometimes the boys and girls fell down. It was his way, I don't know, or he liked to look at children, I don't know. Many children got into it. . . and he had many fights with them, too. That is why they left here. And afterward, the bishop sent the two of them back here again. Acuña's second wife died here. Acuña went over there and came back the second time with another wife. That is when he hit the children, punished the boys and girls. He had this big stone in front of the house, with sand around it, and took out the children and made them kneel in the sand, and sometimes, when he got mad at the children, he hit them with a belt like so; he treated them badly. Good teacher; he taught the children very well, people said, but the bad thing is that he mistreated the children, hit them and punished them. (Male)

We can say that it was a period of great changes in subsistence activities, with the people adopting the new ways easily. The lack of many elements considered fundamental by the external society did not mean a feeling of poverty or misery according to the testimony of persons of that period. To the contrary, moments of common experience are generally remembered with nostalgia, such as the meetings at church and everyone's preoccupation with displaying their best garb even though they might be barefoot; marriages that lasted sometimes days; the arrival of the Navy ships; the shearing of the sheep, etc. Furthermore, there is testimony of people who lived in caves or in houses, with the minimum to eat and sleep, and who remember it with affection and even acknowledge the amenities that exist now, but who especially value the capacity of people of that era to share.

We were born on this side of Moeroa, but when I was a little girl, my grandfather took me and my brother, and we went to live in a cave. There we lived, my grandmother, my grandfather, my brother and I. We slept there, in the cave. We had blankets made of flour sacks, and no mattresses. Why would I lie? When my grandmother thought that things were dirty, we had a horse, and my brother José and my grandfather walked on the side, and I got up on the horse and we went to the sea to wash and dry on the stone fence and then we came back to the cave. We used lamb fat for light. (Female)

In general, although children enjoyed different activities, preferably related to the sea, they also worked a lot. From an early age, boys as well as girls started to work, fetching water, milking the cows, gathering firewood, planting and harvesting.

There are different versions of stories that relate to the physical labor of the girls. Some informants claim that girls were assigned domestic work, while others assert that they did the same work the boys did.

They sent us to plow, and if you don't do it, you better watch out. That's why life was hard. Me, so little, how was I going to handle such a big and heavy plow? They made you do heavy work. Wake up would be at three in the morning, latest. Do you know where it was? You go straight from here. They would tell you to go to some place to help, so you went there to help. You'd finish that, and you went milk the cows. You would have dried bananas, dry like this, and that's what you had with your breakfast. But before that, you had to feed the hogs. When the hen jumped up in the tree, you had to feed the chickens. And then you would get started; you'd get plowing. Every day you got up at three or four. You went to Tahai to give water to the chickens. You had to take dirty bags to go wash them, and take along a gourd bottle to fetch water. When the tide went down, fresh water came out; it was fresh and you got it like this, only to wash dishes and cook. You could not drink it. There was rainwater that they collected in the drum when it rained, and that is what we drank. I had to bring the water and the clean bag or the blankets that they sent to have washed in salt wa-

ter and then rinse them in fresh water right in the same spot, and I brought them, or poor me, if I didn't do all that work. We washed without soap, only water. You did like so on the rocks, and the dirt came out. Just imagine getting into a drum with water, and if we did not do it, we were put in a corner and we had to kneel on a stone there. Too bad for you if you fell asleep. (Female)

The girls took part in domestic work, but some also did heavy work away from home, and this depended on the characteristics of the families.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Women used to get married very young, often at 12 or 13, without a preceding period of courtship. Parents generally arranged the marriage and, at this age, a young woman was deemed to be of marriageable age, even if she had not begun to menstruate.

In general, couples needed their families' approval. If for some reason they were related, great conflicts resulted which impeded the wedding. Social and family pressure might lead the pair into a relation of cohabitation or to a definite breakup of the relationship.

My father told my sister, gave her advice: not a married man, look for a husband not related and get married, live well. The old customs, instead of living with a single man, sometimes my sister liked to live with a married man, another woman's. One time I told my older sister, when my sister died, it was all right that she died because she made us, made me ashamed; now we saw her with Matu'a, a man married in our family and she lived with another married man, and another, and another; it was not right. It bothered me so much because I saw that the wives of these men came to the house to complain and say why did she steal my husband, that was not nice, and it was true, too. Now it is quiet; when she died, women never come here to complain, to fight for stealing her husband because a woman suffers because of her husband, because of her children. Because of this and many things, I don't like the old ways, Ana María, because I know; and now life all changed, now the husbands with their wives, each couple, now no fights like before, yes, fights, but not like before, fighting on horseback with a stick, sometimes a head gets broken, blood comes out. (Male)

The family arranged many marriages and would counsel a young man or young woman to marry a certain person who was considered a good person. Parents generally saw to it that their daughter would marry a man who would support her, and therefore, a hard-working man was highly regarded.

Sometimes, because there is an old tradition here, the father and the mother always went to ask for the hand of woman for their son; that was called *nono'i*. They went to ask and said: *Ki oho mai nono'i kai uha mo tooku moa*, ask for a hen for my rooster, O.K. If the people are not related, happy and just say here take

him, because they are not related, because sometimes being related is difficult here in Rapa Nui, much fighting. And if not related, they will go along right away, and all the family will be happy, contented. (Male)

Frequently, families arranged marriages, but some of the people involved did not agree to get married. It was sometimes difficult to go against family decisions, and the wedding was performed anyway. This was the case with a man who was pressured to marry a woman because he was living with an aunt, which was a great problem for the family. The young man gave in under pressure although he did not love the woman who would be his wife. A few days after the wedding, the groom took off in a boat with the woman he loved, and nothing more was ever known of them. The older folks remembered this event which was memorialized in a beautiful song sung by one of the informants.

Look, Ana María, at Miss Erodia's there used to be a little wooden house all made of sheets of zinc below, outside and on top. There I was outside the house with Lucinda, Amalia, Florina, Amalia's sister (Mariana's daughter), Nicolas P., Akileo, and Pedro, all of us known around together. And there we all played skipping rope, or else looked for a guitar and started to teach dancing. They would light Bernardo P.'s lantern, it lit with carbide, and get started doing all that. The young people would go over there, and what a ruckus they made; they went over there to dance, but not with a mind to go and grab a girl, no. To play or to dance and such. That was always on weekends. During this spell, that man came around and saw that all were dancing, playing and all that, and later I hear Leonardo P. tell Florina, 'Where's that man Guillermo?' She said, 'He's about to leave.' And so he said, 'Tell him to play guitar.' He started to play guitar, and I'm not even there. Then, a month went by, and I found out I was supposed to marry him without even knowing I was going to get married here or why. A Navy ship arrived, and I went off with a sailor on horseback. So then I said, why should I marry that person? One day Salome came and took me outside to the corner of the house and told me I might want to marry that man. I kept my mouth shut; I did not say a thing. Then, she told me, 'As you said, you will agree to what I say.' You are going to say yes.' No! I didn't understand what she's told me and I started to cry. Three, four or seven months go by and the matter of arranging the wedding comes up, blah, blah, blah, and that man brought two lengths of white fabric, one silk, one not, to make the wedding dress. I told him, 'What the devil goes on here?' I think to myself if I had a hole, I would crawl into it, Ana Maria. But I didn't understand any of this talk of getting married and all that. Nobody told me what he might want or how he thought, or what he was going to do or what he might like. Nothing. So then, the wedding preparation and all that, and one day that man went and paid a lady to give me a permanent. I had long hair. I never thought

that permanent was to go get our license. We got there at around ten in the morning, or eleven it seems, where the captaincy was; there was a Navy mechanic's house and the woman knew how to give permanents. I went there and the lady gave me a permanent. I got the permanent and we left. And later, the next day, a lady came with a white dress, black shoes, white stockings, and two crowns, a white one and a pink one. I stood there staring and said, 'What is this for?' Nobody said it's for you, or anything. Then she told me to go bathe, and I went ahead and had a regular everyday bath; I washed my body and all that. It was about noon. At two or three o'clock, she had me dress and finished dressing me, and a lady came and said, 'Let's go.' I asked her where to, and she just said, 'Let's go.' I left and went along Te Pito Te Henua alley, down there where the town hall is now lived a *practicante* (a male nurse), and he had come out to look at the bride. . . . We were going to get married, Ana Maria. Everybody was looking and clapping to get a glimpse of the bride. It's a shame they didn't have cameras back then. That's where we went. I made up my mind along the way; I'm going to go there and I'm going to say I'm not getting married, and that's that. My mother did not sign the wedding registry. They made us sit in the office; there were four witnesses and the godfather. They went over there and they made them write I don't know what; the governor wrote, that is, the port captain wrote, and then he told him, you all sign. He signed and then he told me, 'You're going to be a married woman; you're going to sign there.' I was about to say, 'I don't want to get married,' and I saw some Navy men here in that part of the sofa, a revolver, and I said to myself, 'If I say no, I'm ignorant, and he's going to shoot me,' and I started to tremble with fear. Then, this gentleman said to me, 'You have to sign, Madam'; and he got nervous and said, 'What's wrong?' I could not talk, but I wanted to say 'I can't get married because I don't want to.' So then, I looked at him and if I tell him no, that man is going to kill me, so I just had to sign. So I ended up married. Later, the next day we went to church to get married and all, and eat and everything. After that, we went to his house. I started crying; I did not want to go. He took me to his house and the strange thing is he had two beds, one for him and one for me. Can you imagine? He said, 'This bed is for me and that one is for you.' What did I know? I did not know what he was like. He was older than I was, so he did not tell me we have to sleep together. In the morning, after the wedding was over, as soon as I got up, I went to seven o'clock mass, and then I went by where I used to live, and as I had the key, I stayed there and later I left to go make some food, but I did not make any. After a day he said to me 'You don't know how to cook.' I told him, 'Where am I going to cook? Do you have a pot, do you have plates, do you have everything?' In the wink of an eye he said to me

there's the plates, the pots and a kind of kitchen, but with straw on top, stone below. He made a stove with a kind of tub to put the pots on to cook; he chopped firewood, and there it was. And I told him 'What do I put in there, rocks or what? So he vanished and came back with a lamb. When I married him, I did not go out to the campo; he left me at home to do things my way, to clean the floor of the house, to make the bed, to wash and all that, but who was I going to cook for if he did not come home? I knew how to cook stew. After I got all my chores done, I made him a place to put the pots, the plates and all that. I felt like doing something, but I looked at him, and it was like a poison coming in. I did not want to be with him. (Female)

Many marriages were forced by the government representatives, and this situation was in some way supported by the priests that came around from time to time.

Ana Maria, people used to tell me because my mom got sick, my dad killed her, beat her. My grandma didn't want my dad to marry my mom and Acuña Exequiel, when he was here, he went to marry my mom with my dad. Before Acuña, when bachelors fell in love with a woman, they walked along with the woman, and when Acuña saw that, he would come up to the woman and call out immediately, 'Eh, you two! Are you in love with this woman?' He said yes, she said no, I don't love him. 'You don't love him! If you don't love him, to jail with you right now.' He said that and he hit her, too. He punished him so that he would accept, he had to get married, and so did my mom. My grandma did not want it. One day, Acuña called her, took her there, told her 'Madam, I am calling you so that your daughter marries Pedro Pablo.' My grandma told him she didn't like this man, didn't want the marriage. There was a real small room, and he put my grandma in there and locked her up, and when he opened it again, she fainted and fell out because she didn't want the marriage. And Matias Hotu told my grandma, that same old man told me, 'Let her get married because you are wasting your breath saying no.' That is why my mom married my dad." (Male)

All agree that the wedding ceremony was something beautiful for the happiness it brought and the food that was shared. At times, it lasted for days of singing, dancing and eating. It is important to note that no alcohol existed at that time so that the festivities unfolded happily and without excesses, a situation that all the informants recognize as a positive aspect of olden times.

When the day came, the families of both the groom and bride arrived and began to prepare a *curanto*, put together the food, prepared the songs and music; they got everything ready so the wedding would be beautiful. In the old days they always made a kind of boat; they put it all in a sailboat. That is always how it was done. They always put down some white cloth,

some colorful flowers, adorned with money up on the sail; they take that boat to the wedding and to the church singing and dancing. When they came out again, they took it to the house and there it stayed. (Male)

The weddings were very pretty. They made a boat with bamboo; then, they put in sticks pointing up. My mom dressed as a *mataroa* (sailor) with a cap and everything and got in; and they put in a thing that made the boat go around (a tiller). I was looking at my mom, and she said 'You have to dance to make the wedding pretty.' (Female)

That custom has lasted to this day, but its origin is unknown. It consists of forming the outline of a boat with piece of white fabric, which is held up by several persons facing inward. Flowers and money are sewn onto the fabric. All sing as they head toward the wedding site. There they approach the parents of the bride and wrap the cloth around them. Sailor uniforms, as well as boats, were admired by the entire population. This can only be understood when one lives on an island, completely isolated from all contact and where the arrival of a boat, like that of people from other places, was a great event that involved festivities, rejoicing, novel objects, and romance on many occasions. Those who made up this figure and contributed the money were the aunts and uncles of one of the spouses, in other words, the cousins of one of the sets of parents, as a form of homage and help.

SEPARATION AND INFIDELITY

Many marriages from this period were carried out without a period of courtship preceding it and, in many cases, without the woman's input. It is surprising the number of people who, having gotten married this way, later separated and went on to form new families, while others had to stay together due to family pressure or fear of the husband's violence. Separation, which appears as being accepted in the more traditional accounts, was condemned by the Church. This meant that certain unions were maintained, but also, that parallel and secret relationships existed.

Well, when the man left, the woman had her well-being, her freedom. The woman could also leave first. She could go with another person. I remember when I was young there was a woman, and she got married to a skinny guy, still alive, older than I am; so she married him. Well, after she got married, I thought what a fool I am for not marrying that woman, and later, she came looking for me. So right then and there, she blindly took off with me; her husband got lost, and she stayed with me. I don't know how long. I got tired of not being able to go out and be seen by people. It was all hidden, so I got bored with it. So, I say this can't be. How can something like this be? I didn't have the freedom to go out and walk in the light of day with her, nothing. Well, that is how the old system was. But now I see and I say to myself that it's great foolishness. (Male)

Some women bore children within their marriages, but they were other men's; although many were aware of this situation, it was kept quiet.

Well, I really loved my wife; I loved her with all my heart, but after I saw her with my own eyes with other men, with the governor, she had my first son. I thought of leaving, but I said no; because of my son, I reminded myself. So my life went on, and there were others and others. Jeez, but I've seen so much in my life with her, but I always put it behind me; let's just say I just stayed with it because of the children. And later, at the end, when she was with my son, I had come back from the bank, and he was alone, I asked him, 'Where is your mom?' He said they left. They left because a Tahitian came. Really, I swear, that is when I got down on my knees and prayed to God, 'God, I can't take it any more; please, take me away from all this.' So then, you're not going to believe it, but I got her out of my heart and I don't think about her any more. And that's how I left her. I've seen her with other men, with my own eyes, not just once, but three or four times I've seen her, with my own eyes; you think she'd say she's sorry for this? But no, nothing. It really hurts me. When I go out to work, I carry this pain inside me and wonder what's happening at home. You know, when a woman is seen like this, what is a person to think? Is everything all right at home? What is happening at home is not always what one thinks. The most important thing is trust. One sees this and can't get it out of his heart, and that's what happened to my wife. That's why I left her. I told her 'I'm getting on in years, but I'm going to leave. I'm going to leave you.' (Male)

In addition to this reason, the husband's jealousy and adultery also appear as causes for separation. In general, the woman is the one who leaves; the man can more easily maintain a double standard.

It's not infidelity; that's not it. Why? Because there are fewer women, more men than women, a woman can have four or five men, but if a man sees you with a man, he respects you; he can't do anything with you. True, he can come up to you and talk as a friend, but nothing more. Yes, there were few women. I'm going to tell you something, it's a secret of mine, I have to tell you, there were so many men and they were so horny that they did it with horses and with pigs. It is possible that some women had several men, but it is difficult to hide around here; you can't hide. For example, you live with a man, he goes out to work in the field, and you're alone. Before, kids didn't stay home with their mothers; they went out to look for things. So, if a man came, and you were alone, you're cooked. In other words, people who did that are those who are forty or fifty years old, no younger. A woman was never safe. If you always had your children nearby, nothing would happen to you. Even if they were little, nothing would

happen to you if they are nearby. (Female)

Often, perpetual pregnancy compelled a woman to stay with her husband. One of the informants stated that she was very tired of having children, practically one a year, and suggested to her husband the possibility of an operation, since there now was a hospital; he refused on the grounds that she would run off with another man.

All the women interviewed complained one way or another about the men, alluding to mistreatment, adultery and jealousy. Many couples separated a few years after getting married, a situation repudiated by the Catholic Church whose influence was such that even today, unions are not accepted unless officially sanctioned. Although accepted socially, the partners are still referred to as so-and-so's husband or wife even if they were with that person a very short time, and with the new *de facto* partner practically all their lives.

At that time several women separated from their husbands, but sometimes people tried to go back because she was a married woman, but many separated. Sometimes, the marriage was accepted, they got married, and then they separated. Sometimes, people heard what others said, they butted in, they said this woman was going with this man, or this man was going with this woman; that was bad because that changed the marriage, and they separated. (Male)

SEXUAL RELATIONS

It is interesting to note that some women never married, some had relations with men and had children, and others, only three according to my information, were never known to have a mate.

It was reported that many girls who married at a young age with older men, did not have sexual relations right away but years later, and in one case not at all with her husband since he had chosen to go off with another woman and later disappeared in a boat.

Women married young. The young women who got married first were Mrs Nahoe and Eloisa Pakarati. Those two ladies got married at the age of twelve. But the men respected them until they had grown, until they were seventeen. I tell you, Ana Maria, it's true because I've seen it, and I used to go to Vaitea myself, he worked for the Company and took his wife, but he didn't do her any harm, he didn't do anything to her, he didn't have relations with her, nothing, not a thing; he took care of her like a daughter. He was older. In those days, Ana Maria, I'm going to tell you, I was about thirteen and I was still single. There are young people who went to Hanga Roa 'Otai to swim, as God would have it, Ana Maria, girls and boys, men; you think that he is going to see if you are there, with his behind and his thing. No, the women nothing, although it is obvious he is like a beast, nothing is said; they have another idea in mind. When I was in Vaitea, I did not have relations with that person because he scared me, because I did not know what to do. After a year had gone by, on a

certain day, after the shearing had ended, the shearing people came to town, and that day my aunt went to play cards. She always played cards, and a guy that I liked came, a Rapanui, the father of a family. He told me this and that, and I said I would try this thing out, but I was scared. We did it and I got pregnant. I didn't enjoy the things that he did; I didn't even feel anything. Can you imagine a person never having relations with anyone? With all that, I got sick during this period of time, and I had to wash with water and all to cleanse myself because I was left in such a state that I could not walk well for the first time. Maybe he thought of just having sex, and nothing else, something like that. He was married and his family found out that the baby was his. I couldn't deny it. When I learned that I was pregnant, I didn't know what to do because I went to the doctor and he told me that I was pregnant. The doctor asked me who the father was, and I told him it was none of his business. The first person I told I was pregnant was a friend who was married and widowed. I mean she left her husband. She was pleased. She said that if it had been her, she would have been the happiest woman in the world." (Female)

As for the first sexual experiences, women agreed that there was little knowledge of what to do and that, much later, after having relations with a few men, they learned of other pleasurable aspects of sexuality. This is perhaps an interesting aspect to consider in the attraction foreign men had with certain women who were attracted to the attention, gentleness and amorous play that preceded any sexual relation.

Foreigners always awakened an interest and a certain amount of attraction for what was different. One can only imagine what it was like to live in total isolation, always seeing the same people, knowing their life situation, and having only a faint idea of the concept of the unforeseen, the unknown. Likewise, this situation made people want to leave the island; some left in boats for Polynesian islands, others were lost at sea, and some got aboard Navy ships as stowaways to get to the mainland.

The most beautiful memory I have is having met Fernando on the mainland. It is something special for me. Also, when I left here. I was here for so long, and as I took care of other people, I did not wear new clothes, only used clothes. My godmother used to buy cloth and make things to give her daughter; then, she would pass it on to me. But I thought it was a good thing, a girl thing; I thought they were good things and pretty for their style. When I met Fernando, I wore a used dress, new shoes and a new purse. That's something very important to me. When I was working, that was different because I bought my own things, new things. (Female)

I prefer men from abroad because it is believed they help when one gets sick. When I got sick, my husband came to my bedside and stood there staring and said, 'Why are you sick?' What could I answer? Nothing. (Female)

Well, as I said, there are street women, it's not a big deal, but there are women who do that. They show up when the men arrive, but not like a house of prostitutes; that doesn't exist. But there used to be some women who went with the sailors, but they were women who were used to that; they were familiar with men. But I'm not talking about fourteen or fifteen year-old women; that was never done because they took care of those young women. Their mom and dad kept them at home and wouldn't let them out for any reason. Even if there was a party, they stayed at home, and they were used to being in by a certain time and not leave the house. (Male)

In general this practice of women joyfully welcoming and having relations with foreign men was accepted. Men will insist that only certain women, mostly adults, did this, but judging from the reports of the women, age did not matter much. It is possible that some were prevented from taking part by parents or some family member, but basically, making contact with visitors was always a desirable thing not necessarily out of sexual interest, but also for the attraction of conversation, gifts etc.

Although some women never married, but had relations with men who were known, and established a relatively stable life together, other women were never known to have a mate, nor did they have children. This situation seemed rather strange when it was brought up, since some women were known to have chosen not to marry, and in a few cases to remain alone, but nobody had considered the possibility that they would not have had relations with a man.

Some women never got married, Mama Itapera, Isabel Tepihe. You must know her. She died only a few years ago. Also, Miguel Hito's mother whose name is Fatu tini, never married, but had children, but Itapera did not. She was never known to have a mate, maybe a secret one, but she was never seen with one; it was her decision. And Consuelo Tuki who made *matu'a pua'a* (an herbal medicine) never got married. Neither did Erodia get married, have children, or have a mate. None that I ever saw because I used to live in the parish; I lived there before Father Sebastián came here. I never saw a man with her. (Male)

According to present knowledge, sexual relations were suspended at a certain point in the pregnancy to protect the baby, but it was also learned that women responsible for the preparation of certain medicines were not to have sexual relations during this process. Likewise, this applied to men, who were not to have sexual relations while they were preparing the tattoo pigment, since they were going to be tattooing another person.

MENSTRUATION, PREGNANCY AND MOTHERHOOD

Some adult women used to believe that a girl who was menstruating for the first time did so because she had had sexual relations. One of the informants claimed that she had become indisposed following the birth of her first son.

I did not have a period, my grandma and my mom either, until after I got married, until I had children. I didn't menstruate before I got married. I got pregnant right away. (Female)

Oh, Ana Maria, I was so scared when I saw it that I started to shout at my aunt that I had cut my vagina, that blood was coming out; I got a whipping like I had never had, Ana Maria. I did not know this was going to happen. She told me I had had relations with men. That's why that happened to me. That's what women then did when their daughters got their period; they just said right away that she had had relations with a man. I didn't know that it was going to come, I didn't know it's normal; now it's normal, but before it wasn't. (Female)

Apparently, there was a certain lack of knowledge about menstruation and perhaps it was associated with the first sexual relations since these began approximately at the age of the first menses. In Polynesian society, women, especially their sexual parts, were always seen as the possessors of power that was magical but somewhat negative, as it was capable of destroying *mana*, the protective force of a specific location, and eventually take away the taboo, or prohibition that existed over a certain sector. Women were associated with darkness, with hidden powers, and with a great ability to absorb demonic influences, and for that that they were excluded from sacred places.

There were many prohibitions when you were menstruating; you could not go to a cultivated field or it would dry up; or if you mounted a good horse, it could waste away. Even today. (Female)

You can't mount a horse if you are having your period; you can't go to a field that is planted or you will make it dry. The worst is watermelon; you can't go and pick one to eat. Some people keep it locked up, but you have to stay outside or you'll dry it up from one end to the other. That's the problem we have here. You can't get on a horse or it will ruin it. It will go blind or lame. That's what my grandma told me. That's what I taught my daughters, not to go near the plants because I don't know what kind of blood we have. (Female)

It was also reported that women might not walk across fishermen's nets, and even less when they are being woven.

Birth control methods were unknown, so that any union was followed by a pregnancy.

Every year I had a child, eleven boys and eleven girls. I told my husband, 'You are pretty good at this; you marry me to have lots of kids. When I get old, I will get sick.' My husband said, 'Eh, you going to have thirty kids.' That's what he said. If I had not gotten an operation, I would have thirty kids. I got an operation. (Female)

In general, the first child was the most important, with the woman receiving a lot of attention from the husband, his family, and from her own family. It was not the same for a woman

pregnant out of wedlock or a single woman. The most desired child was a first-born son, the *atariki*. A female child, although equally well received, was looked upon as someone who would leave the family at some point. At four months into the pregnancy, the husband's mother would go live at the pregnant woman's home to care for her and so that the husband and wife should have no further sexual relations, it was reported, so as to prevent any harm to the child to be born. At this time, a *curanto* was prepared and opened before sunrise. The pregnant woman's parents received the first serving of chicken; then, the husband's parents and family ate.

In general, births were assisted by women known in the community as midwives, but it was also reported that some men could help and knew exactly how to tie the umbilical cord. On the subject of tying the umbilical cord, it was learned some years back from Felipe Teao, who only recently died, that this was accompanied by a ritual. The cord was cut with the teeth or with an obsidian knife; scissors were also used after they were introduced. After the birth, it was customary to care for the woman by placing a warmed stone on her abdomen, a process that was repeated for many days.

As for the placenta, one report has it that it was thrown in the sea, but the great majority reported that it was buried, a practice that is continued today in some families, but that is fading since all births, except for a rare few, now take place in the hospital.

The birth was followed by a series of rituals having to do with the child, as well as prohibitions having to do with the mother. The woman could not eat over her first born, nor could she eat things that had been carried in the hands of the child once he could walk; once grown, she could not eat food brought by her son and hung from his neck. The mother could not cut her son's hair, only the father's brother at six months. If these practices were followed, the son would have success in life; everything he planted would grow and his fishing would be fruitful. Some of these beliefs continue to be held by some families.

Generally, a single woman's pregnancy was not repudiated since the concept of living in an extended family assumed women's maternity and subsequent care of the child. Many women had children out of wedlock and later married, the children often remaining to be cared for by the family.

Sometimes one feels bad for a woman, but after it feels like something normal. The only happiness for one is the first child; after that it all seems normal, not such a big thing. But one always feels for what is being born. The family came, food was prepared and they helped the woman. The first-born has to be a son; that is one's intention, to have a replacement for one's self. That is what one feels. Truly, whenever I am away from home, I tell my wife if I am not here, my eldest son is here in my place, and if he is not here, then my second son has to be here. (Male)

I stopped working when I was six months pregnant. I had a normal baby at home. Rafael and his wife helped me because I got sick on a Sunday and the baby was not born; this thing, I don't know what it

is called, came out. Afterward, I felt this contraction pain. The baby was born at eleven o'clock at night. Ana Maria, what I felt was the pain and the contractions, but when the baby was coming out, I felt something like a burn, and nothing more; and then, he was born. And the others were helping me because I think the baby was in trouble and had the cord wrapped around him. My aunt helped me, too, and my mother was there. My mother seemed to love him in her own way because she was cuddling him, but in a distant way. I suppose there was some affection. But afterward, I was afraid to get pregnant again; there was nothing to prevent it. I really didn't want to get pregnant again. How am I going to be able to raise a child? It was really hard for me to raise my son, but then when he started to walk, I went back to work. (Female)

As for abortion, it was generally reported that it did not exist, but it was learned that with the new leaves of the tree called *miro tahiti*, with the scientific name of *Melia azederach* (chinaberry), an infusion was prepared and given to drink, producing a kind of poisoning that resulted in miscarriage. This knowledge would have been introduced toward the end of the last century and beginning of this century with the arrival of this tree from Tahiti.

ADOPTION

There were no families without children, whether these were natural, adopted, or some of each. Children were raised by all the members of the family and knew who their natural parents were without it causing any major problem. At that time in Rapanui society, adoption was a common practice, a custom rooted in the past. However, it is important to distinguish different types of adoption. Some adoptions took place at the time of birth, the newborn being handed over to some member of the family, generally due to the fact that the woman did not want the child because it was another man's, and not the man with whom she was living at the time; she had many children; she was a single woman; or simply because some member of the close family wanted it.

S. P. raised me. I used to ask her who my mom and dad were and she told me that she was my mom. One day, I am not sure when exactly, Juan sent someone for fire to light his cigar, and a lady told me, 'You know, that person is your brother, your older brother.' I was surprised because he was bigger and he never told me he was my brother. And later, when I had grown, all along with Miss S., everybody told me that M. was my brother and so on; I did not believe it because they did not tell me earlier. One day my real mom came. I was at church, she called me, and I went, but she did not tell me she was my birth mom, either, but I would go and help my mother cook and set the table. She was not affectionate. Not so much at the beginning toward me, but later I started to have more contact, and then she became more affectionate toward me. S. always hit me and

cut my hair so it looked bad; she cut off a chunk and that's it. When I met my mom, we had a distant conversation. She was very pretty. She was married to D. P., but he went to the mainland. Maybe she got tired of waiting for him and lived with the other man. And when D. returned, his wife was no longer there. Others' children had been born. She could not get married again because she was already married to D. P. Of course, she had lived with other men. (Female)

Other adoptions were arranged when the children had already reached a certain age and were taken in by members of the family as company, and in some cases, so they could help in certain domestic functions.

We were all raised by different families; my mom could not raise us because she worked for the Company, so we were all farmed out. And at that time they had some system that a person comes and signs up and gets someone to raise. We were family, but I was without my real siblings. . . but equally, I took the others as brothers because it was very important to me because I was raised there. There were many things that happened in life there, but one forgets all that. If I were not there, I would not be this way because there I learned to work, my responsibility, all that. Really, I learned to fish, to dive, for what reason? At that time I used to look at those who had parents, who had all their things; and so, one suffered. Actually, I learned to make figures; not that anyone taught me to make them. I made them myself because I had seen Juan Riroroko, when the sailors' boat arrived, go buy sweaters, caps, like the ones children liked at that time. And too bad, it stayed bottled up inside; and I thought if I had had parents, I could have had all that. Well, then, what happened? I suffered, and the suffering gave me the strength to do it, to learn all by myself, to change and get ahead and I kept working in figure carving. Yes, I suffered for many things; I looked around, and those who had parents had everything, and I did not. So, when they married me off, I had children and many people told me to give up a child. I said no; I am not going to give him up; even if I have fifty children, I would rather die with them. Because I had the experience, I knew for myself what it was like. The person who adopts is not a parent; it is different, very different. I have seen it in my own case. He who has a parent can rarely be bossed around, but the one who has to do as he is told is the adopted child. I felt a difference. But, I am grateful; it does not matter that it happened to me, but I am thankful because it allowed me to go on with my life. I am grateful to them for teaching me how to work. Really, at fourteen I left there, they made it my responsibility; I worked to earn my living, to have my things and all, and I have continued to work. (Male)

There is agreement among those who reported having been adopted at a later age by other families that they were treated differently than the natural children were. There were

many reports of grandparents who took responsibility for some grandchildren, took care of them and loved them with the idea that when they had grown, they would take care of them. All the informants agree in their sense of loss for their grandparents and in recognizing all the affection that they received from them, contrary to what they feel toward their own parents.

My grandpa took me because he loved me and my brother, José. That's why he took us. My mom did not feel sorry because she knew that he would take good care of me. My grandpa told the two of us to get up on the horse to go to Mataverí; so, I got on with José and we went to Mataverí to see my mom. She had a big house. I raised Petero. I don't know who told my mom that my brother's son had been born, and my dad told me, 'Let's go get him.' And so we went. Down there where Miss Maria Leon was, there was a stone house with a pasture up above; we went in, and José's wife was lying down. My dad went in and took off his shirt and said, 'Where's my grandson?' The lady's father came and opened up, and I looked. 'He looks like a lizard moving his hands and feet so.' I said to my dad, 'Look at that lizard child.' My dad started to cry and told the father of José's wife, 'Can't you put some kind of rag to cover this child?' He had left him out in the pasture just like that. My dad went down over there, took off his shirt and put it on him, got the kid out of there and brought him in and gave him to my mom. My dad brought him in a jiffy. I told him, 'Leave him here for the milk.' He said, 'No, José's wife is not going to take care of him.' It was true; she did not love him. She was living with a guy from the mainland in that house across from the port captain's. When he was born, my dad brought him home, and that was where he stayed. When I made lunch, I gave him something to eat. So far, Petero has never been sick. He was raised with all my sons. He was very good. My mom made a fire with dry sweet potato leaves, picked some sweet potatoes and cooked them for him. When mom came home, she would run and grab a jar, go up to the fire and melt some sugar and made a kind of coffee; then, she took it out and put it in another jar so Petero could drink it. Sometimes he just cried because he did not want it, and my mom cried and said, 'Give it to me; give me the sweet potato.' My mom opens the fire and takes out the sweet potato, just like a sweet potato that had been put in a bread oven. (Female)

It was common for children and young people from other families to come to live, sleep, and be fed at the home of a family who would take them in. There were many reasons for this, such as homes with few resources, emotional abandonment, loveless adoptions, family violence, paternal abandonment, maternal abandonment, or simply the attraction of another family's lifestyle. These stays could last weeks, months and sometimes, years. There are cases of single men adopting nieces or nephews and raising them as their own.

One day, someone motioned me over and said to me

'Look, this is a secret between me and you, you know, nothing more. Just so you know, I hope you don't adopt that child. You know what it means when a man adopts a child; it means that he touched his sister with his own body, and this baby was born. And you know that is false before God and the king, and that is not a very good thing.' I remembered what Father Sebastián told me when I adopted my daughter; he did not want it. Father saw me and said, 'I'm going to pray and write adoptive daughter, but I am never going to write in here that she is yours. Take care if you adopt her as your daughter because you have committed an error, a lie before God and the king, too.' When he told me that about that child, I remembered what Father Sebastián told me because it was the second time that I had heard it, and I realized what the Father had told me about my daughter. In the registry I adopted my daughter. (Male)

AGGRESSION AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Another of the topics covered was violence within the family. All the informants affirmed that certain families were more aggressive than others. A recurrent theme among women was men's violence toward women, whether it was confirming or denying a situation of violence and passing judgment over the kindness of this or that man for not being an abuser, which determined to a certain extent that this attitude was habitual.

There were also reports of women's aggression, sometimes against men, but principally toward other women, generally for reasons of jealousy or cheating.

The main reason for a family to get angry at another, you know, is jealousy by the husband. At that time there was a woman who lived with another husband; that is why they did the *canto ei*, the cursing song, and also for those women. The lady died and the husband was the man who abandoned his wife. That is why the family started to fight. Look, first they fought in front of the church; they hid outside and when they came out and saw them, they came and fought. A lot of them got together and they hit each other. They fought right in front of the church door. They were always fighting because that family lives here right on the corner. She came from up over there in the afternoon with her clothes all clean. She came around here and danced. The other woman came out and fought every day. Ana Maria, so much went on before; that is how it was. (Male)

There were reports of abusive men who went as far as torturing women and at times even causing their early death due to their injuries. These situations occurred within the family and where there was not always intervention to effectively eliminate the problem.

If for a man, the woman knows the man is messing around with a girl, or likewise, if a man knows a woman is messing around with someone, that is the aggression he has. You know a certain man was abusive; you know what he did? He came home, his wife

was cooking. When it rains, the firewood gets wet, so that she couldn't cook; you have to light it slowly because it is wet. So, he came home and asks his wife for his food, and she told him that it was not ready yet. She had one pot with milk and taro and another on the fire with manioc that needed to cook. He took a stick from the fire and burned her vagina with it. She came back here to her mother's house. I did not see this myself; the wife told me about it. A few women had a bad time of it. Men used to be real strict; they did not let them do all the things they wanted to. You were just like a slave. (Female)

Women had to be very strong to decide to make a break from this kind of situation. There was a report of a specific case of a woman who managed to hide in the church and various other places, and after a long time in this situation, her husband got bored and left her.

The old lady was used to living in the church. She separated from the old man, and he went looking for her and found her again, but the old lady was real brave; sometimes she went, they told me, and slept right there in the church till morning. The old man searched everywhere; he did not know that she was hiding in there. But sometimes when she comes out, the old man found her and took her home. They kept doing that, and then, the old man got bored and left her.

All the men, I know very well, abusers: an uncle, another uncle, one aunt's husband, another aunt's husband, and my uncle who is with another aunt. I'm going to be frank with you, Ana Maria; sometimes people talk and laugh about life, and, sure, there was some good about how we used to live, but it was an animal's life, men and women, animals, a lot of crime, a lot of wickedness. People tell me that they do not know of any bad things about the past. My nephew told me, 'Look, grandpa, life before was good; I know of nothing bad.' I asked who had told him. 'My grandma,' he said. 'I know my dad;' I told my nephew, 'He's a criminal. I know him, and they told me he abused my mom. He tied a rope around her neck and pulled her around like an animal on horseback. And he killed his other wife, too. My sister gets mad at my dad for having killed my mom. The room, the house was full of blood, the poor thing. A terrible sight!' I told my nephew, 'Listen to me. Don't tell me about your grandmother. Your grandfather is the devil, I tell you. I know my father. He is my father.' So one day, two days, he came home and had a fight with his wife, mistreated her. My dad was very bad. I know how he hit his wife and my mother, too. I know because my grandmother told me that my dad hit my mom. I saw it; lots of men hit. . . It was very bad, not like it is now; now I never see things like before, lots of things. (Male)

Aggression also took place in the form of insult, which could last weeks or months. This situation generally resulted from jealousy or deceit; an informant told of an episode he had

lived through claiming that there was obscene behavior and that he recognized Father Sebastian Englert's strong criticism of that behavior. This story is all the more interesting in that it affirms the existence, even at mid-century, of *koro ei*, an insult ceremony instituted in antiquity and a true catharsis for a tight-knit community.

All these people are devils, sang curses, took off all their clothes, showed their nude bodies, even the woman here; they showed the women's bodies like animals. They sang bad songs and they sang insults in public; *ei* is a song of curses. All those people did all those things, and other families did that, too; they looked for ugly names to call people. There were people who got together with animals; all those things come from the song, the *ei*. They put a hand on a woman's body, lifted her clothes and put in their hands; they did things in public and put in their mouth. They made a *moko* (carved wooden lizard) this big with a great big mouth. Fortunately, Father Sebastián was here in 1936 and 1937. He stopped all that. He said, 'He who uses all those things can no longer come to church. If you are going to sing curses and all those things, don't come to church or I will throw you all out.' Once he threw everyone out; he made them all leave. The people got scared and stopped doing that. (Male)

Violence seems to have existed since time immemorial, as is narrated in some episodes from history and legends, and analyzed earlier. However, it is important to consider that the persons who lived in the first half of this century were the children and grandchildren of those persons who lived at a time of crisis and violence in the interior of the island, as in the first contact with the outside world. Intertribal warfare, slave raids, cannibalism and disease were situations that led people to live in a perpetual state of fear for their lives, creating a strong, aggressive attitude as a form of self-defense and fundamental condition for survival. It seems that among many people, this behavior evolved into a culturally accepted way of being which was transmitted through the generations, but if we analyze the subsequent historical circumstances, its existence no longer made sense.

Now it is no longer how it used to be. Before we were treated like animals. I know my own father, my uncles; they always mistreated the children. They hit me several times; they treated me badly. They left you at home to watch the kids as punishment. (Male)

Although violence, especially by men, was a permanent fixture in the lives of women, most men tended to evade it, always affirming that they had not been abusers, even though they knew they had been from others' reports.

There was no aggression. Look, I figured out that there was only one family that I have seen as more aggressive, that hits women and hits their kids; it is family P. Yes. The father is a savage abuser. I found out he hit his wife and kids with a wire because he lived in that same long house that is over by the church, next to our house. We used to see it. And that

other matter that I found out about back then of hitting the women because they were jealous; I don't know. Let's just say there were certain families that had that character that they hit women. I remember one family, the mother; that woman is dark-skinned and nice, but the husband hit her so much that her face turned black, a black face. Savage, savage. That whole group of people, they used to do a heap of hitting back then. That family is the one, because the mother is the father's sister. That whole family was the most aggressive. But the rest of the families, the majority of them, I'd say, I didn't see them being aggressive. Many families, ours and who else? That's not so much. There were separated women who had left their husbands, but I don't know; there were husbands who were separated, as in my mother's case. My mother says she married and then separated, but just like that, not legally. There were others; several women separated from their husbands, but not legally. Well, it was hard for the woman to get a separation, but it could be done, because the man did not accept it. Well, really I have seen it, when there is that kind of abuse, the men hit their wives even when they are pregnant. There is no respect for that. I noticed that when I was young, just a kid, that they hit women who were pregnant. It's horrible, horrible. I have never, ever hit my wife. She was always trying to do all kinds of things, but I tried to avoid it. It's a family like the one I was talking about because they come from a certain family, because my wife's family comes from there. The grandfather is brother of that family, and it is the most abusive family; they have a different way of life. (Male)



Only one of the men interviewed gave testimony to the horrible violence that took place in some families, perhaps because he lived in the rather unusual situation of having been raised by his grandmother and never having married.

Some families had more violence and fighting than others, especially a certain family. You know, a lady told me she could not say about the old man; my grandma's husband told me he never had a fight with his wife, was never separated, but others did. My grandfather's wife's sister separated from her

husband, abandoned him and lived with another man, the *ruau mamoe*, the old sheep woman. One old man lived with his wife, but did not live well; he abandoned her and went with another woman and returned and hit and killed her. I saw how he killed her, with a stick to the head, and the blood came out. They treated women like animals. When they told me that now a lot of people go out in the country, walk around without clothes, things like that, nothing but marijuana and a girlfriend, that's the life. God created man and he created woman; that is not bad. In the old days, a husband would rob another's wife, and woman another man, and make a fight. Ana Maria, it was right there in the church; he grabbed her at the entrance of the church when she came out and threw her down right there on the doorstep. (Male)

A VIEW OF WOMEN, MOTHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS

As for the family, those interviewed gave a positive impression of its structure and dynamics. They value its unity of work and feeling of sharing. The view that is held of women from the perspective of both men and women is that they are considered very hard working.

The only thing I knew when I was a child with more or less awareness was that my mom was real hard working. My mom worked a lot for the Company. She went to work in Vaitea as a cook for the workers, and I was with my mom. Later, a lady administrator came to the island and didn't want any kids

over there in Vaitea, so my mom sent me to another family because I had a sister who had married into that family, and I stayed there. I was about seven. Until I was seven, I was with my mom, more or less. I remember that my mom did work a lot. I saw her with my own eyes go get milk in the rain, in the mud, and I would cry looking at my mom, a working woman. My mom was a working woman. Her whole life was working, always trying to help everyone. She worried about everything. (Male)

Women generally were dedicated to domestic chores, but also planted and harvested, carried firewood, collected shells and other products from the coastal area. They also plaited *kakaka* (banana fibers) and *nga'atu* (cattail reeds) into matting

(*moengas, peue*) and hats.

Women were very hard working back then. I am going to tell you about the old-timers, people my age, the elders. We got up in the morning. I got up at six in the morning, would go get the oxen, yoke them together to work. My aunt would go up there around eight or so, with all the kids to get things ready. Some go get milk, and others go pick sweet potatoes to cook, to have breakfast. My aunt prepared the fire and the man also helped, and sometimes we went up there to do things. That is what everybody did. And when they planted corn, all the young girls, say of fourteen, thirteen, ten or eleven years old, all go to work to pick corn. Back then, when the Company was here, we used to plant corn, and people harvested it. When the corn was dry, everybody went in, men and women, took the corn from the stalks and threw it on the ground, and then, we men would get the horse to haul it up into the house. Then, women, too, some stayed to fill the sacks with corn for the horse to haul, and others rode bareback. Everyone had a sack of corn to carry, and that is how it is. The women were, let's say, more organized; they never went out. There were women from certain families who did, but in the majority of families, fourteen- and fifteen-year old women did not go out at night until they got married. During the day, they were free to go dancing, but only until five o'clock in the afternoon. Not like the young men because the young men did go out at night. They had more freedom, but also had a certain schedule for going out because they had to think about having to work. The old people did not talk about how women were; they did not talk about that, but they talked about the past, about the older things, but only certain things, say, about *moai* and all those things that happened, how people lived back then, that sort of thing. About history and what it was. But to talk to you about women, because someone told me that back then, women liked to go get shellfish. Women did things in the house. The men were always working, looking for ways to maintain the house. That is what I remember from my childhood. Because I remember that my stepfather, when the other family was raising me, sometimes went out to fish, sometimes bought a lamb, all these things to maintain the house. He raised pigs, he raised chickens, all those things to maintain the house. That is what I remember, the men brought things home so that the family would lack for nothing. Women, too, worked in the fields back then, because after the meal, they could go help plant the sweet potatoes, what have you, certain things, and then, return to do their chores, get the milk, feed the pigs, the chickens, what have you. I noticed that men never worked in the house. Well, yes, they repaired the house, but, no, they never cooked. They can build a fire, get the fire ready. Women took care of everything in the house. The men back then took care of other things.

I remember the wife of an uncle of mine. Well, I know nothing of her life beyond this, but from the moment I met her, she was always very nice. I never saw or heard her swear at the children; she always used kind words. She said things, but never aggressively, like asking her son to fetch something here or there, not to do something here or to do something there. That is how it was back then. But not now; now things are different. Women are completely changed; they get involved and into things. Women at that time, when people came to talk, they did not take part in the conversation of people, of the men. Whenever men were having a conversation, women did not take part. They stayed out of it; they were there listening, not giving their opinion. With her husband, she could, but in a conversation, the woman did not give an opinion. She always listened and let the men talk about things. But now, well, women. . . *owee!*

Women did not make shell necklaces; it has only been a little while that they began doing this. Women's work used to be to cook, and that was all. They took care of the house and the children. I remember that women used to work at matting; my grandmother made straw hats, but on a form, a well-shaped wooden form from Tahiti. My grandmother told me they brought those forms from Tahiti to do that work. They did it with *nga'atu* (bulrush) and *kakaka* (banana fiber), I can still remember. (Male)

Women were valued for their cleanliness and interest in flowers, as well as for their creativity in making various types of dresses and skirts, which were worn at some very special occasions. Some informants remember certain persons who had a talent for sewing, along with the creativity to make curious things.

I remember Virginia, who would go to the hospital to do some sewing, a lot of work, daughter of that lady called Maria, very hard working, very clean. She was high class with her shoes, sewing on a sewing machine, looking for old white patches of cloth. She really liked people from the mainland and went to their houses in Mataverí. She was a hard worker; she had a garden and planted flowers. There was also the Tuki family's grandmother, very clean and very hard working, too. Had a good head for keeping things, putting them together, very good. During President Campo's term, they sent over some canteens and that...what do you call it, and some pots, too, a lot was sent to the island. Ana Maria, you know there were not pots; you just grabbed any old jar to drink coffee. They sent mounts and bits, all those things for the horse; they sent military uniforms to the island. People put on pants and vests, and the women took apart the cape and made skirts for the blouses. There was much help from the military president. He sent some of the exiles to settle at Urbano Hey's house. At church on Sundays, all the women wore long and wide clothes and a hat, and when they came

to church they would sit just so, spreading their dress out so others could sit on their clothes on the floor. So pretty! The clothes were always white. Sometimes people had clothes in colors, or the material came because the company also brought material, lengths of fabric; that is why people wore other colors, khaki, blue or red, but with a strip of white, with a hat made of *nga'atu*, banana, sugar cane, or *maika*. All the people made their own weavings and made their own straw hats and went to mass wearing them. The men really liked their hats; they tied them with a sailor's black bandana. The women wore their dresses with a black belt, a sailor's bandana at the neck, also. It was pretty and clean, Ana Maria. After they came out of church, they came down to the *plaza*, to a place called *Puku*, next to the church, in front of the house where that lady had a business; what is it called? There in front is a place, a stone called *puku iropa* where all the women came wearing their new clothes and looking for people to see them; that is why they gave it the name "*puku y ropa*" so they could look at the clothes, whoever had nice-looking clothes. The men wore black pants, a white shirt and a hat, the children always wore pure white; parents always like white. When they got home, they all put their clothes away for the next Sunday or holiday.

When I went to school, I wore white clothes, a white dress, white pants, white shirt, sometimes with a blue lace undershirt, and always took care. We were very poor, but in my mother's house one would always see that she made lace for the pillows, for the sheets, nice and clean. And when the bed was made, it was all nice and neat with its lace on the pillow, the bedspread and the sheets. She kept everything clean at that time; it was very pretty. The floor always had straw or hay, but the bed was made of *miro tahiti* wood. There used to be a lot of sheep here, and they took the wool, had it washed, and made wool mattresses." (Female)

Grandmothers played an essential role within the family. They raised their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They are remembered as those who gave affection and dedication. All the informants shared the same perception, and on two occasions cried at the memory of their grandmother as the only person who had given them affection.

My grandmother ... was also Queen Eva; you probably know her just from the photo. Old Haa's family, as it is called, old Pakomio's family was

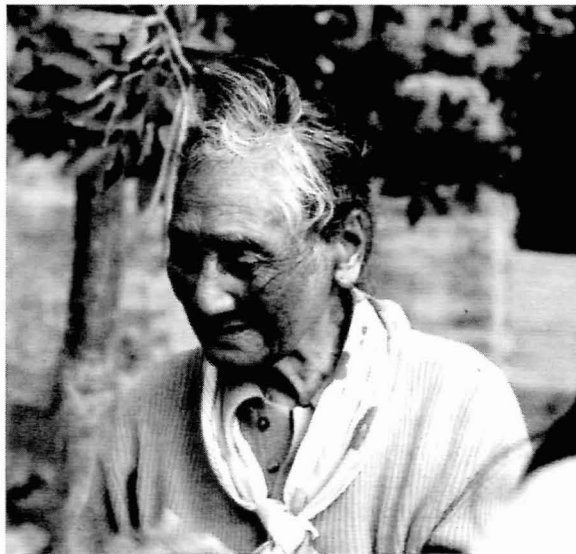
daughter of this Queen Eva, but Nicolas Pakomio's wife, a very pretty woman, beautiful, looks like someone from the mainland, Ana Maria. She takes after her mother, or maybe... Her mother had a large face, a large mouth; the *ruau*, the old woman, is ugly. She was already old when I met her, but her face was large with tattoos and two things she had here, here and here; she looked like an *aku aku*, a ghost. The first time I went to see with my grandmother, I went into R's house because we had gone there on a Sunday for a wedding; that is where we saw her. My grandmother told me we were going to see Eva and she went ahead; when she got near, she looked at me and cried, and my grandmother, too, cried. I looked at her face; what a fright, Ana Maria. I did not want to stay there and look at the old lady. My grandmother returned to bring me back; she called the people because many people go there. She gave me quite a fright; she was a tattooed woman, a real *aku aku* if you ever saw her. (Male)

When I was little, I lived with my grandmother for many years. I knew neither my father nor my mother. She was nice, my grandmother Carolina. She was slender, not fat. She was tall. I just stayed home and washed the dishes, did the wash, cleaned house, made the beds and all that.

My mother did not love me because I loved my grandmother. My father did love me; he loved me a lot. My grandmother died very old and she was pretty. I want to have children. If the (grand) children are not around, I suffer so much. I really love the children because the children also love me a lot. (Female)

Grandmothers were very important because I saw it. I knew my grandmother. Several grandchildren got together in a group. They were important to the children also, very affectionate. Men sometimes behaved badly with the women and the woman would leave. The grandmothers were the ones who took care of the children; they were very good, very affectionate. (Male)

I did not have time to play. From the age of seven I worked on the land, I will always remember. Back then someone had to drive the ox with one person in front leading the oxen, the other with a bamboo stick guiding the oxen. Sometimes the one behind got mad because the animal was not walking right, or was too slow, one hit a rock and fell down, or sometimes fell down on top of you. You just had



The late Amelia Tepano, one of the island's well-known culture bearers. Although her life story is not included here, she was an informant for many anthropologists in the early years. (Photo: G. Lee)

to get up and keep going. Your eyes got full of dirt, but you had to stay with it. From the time you were just a kid, a seven-year old, you had to be strong. That is when I started my working life, up until now. I only remember my grandmother who was affectionate to me when I was a child. Sometimes I remember at night, and it hurts; it hurts inside. At that time, my grandmother, I remember, we ate in from big pot that had a top; I served from it with my grandmother and my first cousin, all three of us lived together and ate from it. Sometimes there was not enough; my grandmother had soup and left the two of us the things to eat. Now, when I think about it, it hurts at times. She would carry sacks of sweet potatoes on her back; she had a rope that she would tie in a certain way, and then get up. Now, I remember all those things that she did. And carry from town, from where the Rioroko family lives, from Orlando's Hotel. Grandma always gave me affection. When I was not at home, and there was no food, she still saved me some cooked sweet potatoes on the fire, and when I came home hungry, she would have it in her hand and tell me, 'Here is something to eat.' One retains that feeling inside; that is why it hurts to remember my grandmother. She never spoke of her father. My grandmother never went to Tahiti. What she told me about was that her father took one of her sisters; he left her here with her mother and took the older to Tahiti where he left her. The sister went with Bornier's daughter, Carolina. Carolina returned to the island. My grandmother was always here on the island. My grandmother was very young, very little when they left. Someone known to her always came from there and came by the Rioroko's house to say hello; they came in the Tahitians' yacht, stopped by to say hello and send her things from the old days. (Male)

A woman told the story of when she had her first child at the age of fifteen, he was so small that he fit in one hand; she thought it would be better to leave him because he would not live. Her mother, the child's grandmother, refused to abandon him, but wrapped him up in cotton, put him inside her blouse, fed him with a cloth soaked in water for many days, and slowly he recovered. The child was raised with great care by the grandmother. In general, women were tied down with domestic work, but they also were involved with chores related to harvesting and gathering, and in some cases, with planting. This did not keep them from willingly assuming new kinds of work, which were being introduced as contact with the outside world was intensifying.

Although the man's role was dominant in the society of this period, a situation supported by the Catholic Church, women maintained a certain independence, which although rarely manifested, was kept hidden, expressing itself in various actions within the established order at those moments.

Many situations surrounding women in the first half of this century are expressed in the telling of legends; in other words, certain patterns of behavior were maintained at the time, despite the cultural impact resulting from the influence of the outside world. Many impressions left by navigators and visitors about

the behavior of women were based on a different culture with a certain scale of values that has a strong Christian and Catholic influence. We can say that the traditional society, maintained until this century and still surviving in many aspects, had women in an eminently domestic position, not only as it related to the home, but also to the means of subsistence.

Women were attributed certain powers over nature, such as magic and healing, according to legends and stories, by giving them the power to prepare and use certain medicines, as well as the ability to interpret dreams, as in the case of Maria Angata in 1914. Men, however, had a strong dominance in Rapanui society.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH

Starting with the arrival of the first missionaries, the Church began altering the traditional customs. Although it is seen as an entity that succeeded in giving a message of peace and, in a certain way, stopping tribal conflicts and the insecurity of women and children, who were the most affected, it is also seen as detrimental toward ancestral customs through a Western discourse of considering certain behaviors as pagan and sometimes primitive. The missionaries did not stay on the island for a long time, and the priests who came during the first half of the twentieth century only stayed as long as the Navy ship.

The reports from this period are markedly paternalistic and give the impression that the Rapanui lived in total poverty. The latter situation is not corroborated by the information received by the people of that time.

The arrival of Father Sebastián in the thirties meant the daily and permanent presence of the Church, and its drastic interference in family matters and personal behavior. If certain customs had been maintained up to this point, they were now stopped, somehow prohibited, although they stayed alive inside people and manifested themselves in other ways. We can speak of the appearance of the hidden behavior, distant from the social and public discourse. An informant stated that when the missionaries came, *mana*, the ancestral supernatural power that formed the primordial part of the beliefs, disappeared.

The action of the Church was strengthened by the presence of the Navy or the representatives of the Chilean government, who sought to keep the Rapanui isolated from the outside world through a prohibition against leaving the island. Among these was the existence of leprosy. Many medical reports were alarming, and it is well known that leprosy was diagnosed in many persons, among them children, who were ordered to go to a leper colony. Many of them did not have the disease as can be verified by the reports of persons who did not heed the order and who are still alive today and free of the disease.

The Church did not have much influence. What happens is that now, let us say that I am talking about right now, there are things from those days, too, the days of Father Sebastián, where one does not want to show that he has the knowledge of how things are because they wanted to close the curtain on the island, so that one would be born here and die here without knowing about the outside world. That is what I would say was bad. Father Sebastián did this, tried to prevent people here from getting out and

that...what comes is what is fair, that is all. The Navy came to maintain their base for the Company, but they didn't want the people here to go off to the mainland. There came a time when people did not want to put up with this anymore and left in boats; the sailors saw that it was not a good thing, so they granted people the freedom to travel to the mainland. And for the matter of leprosy, too. They said there was leprosy; what a fuss! Well, I guess this was just a way to cover up, just so people would not leave. I think the Father also influenced that whole thing of one having a husband and not separating. According to what I read in the Bible, man himself looks for the law because Jesus Christ left the law on earth because of sin. In my way of thinking, from what I've read, man made up marriage to represent before God, to care for what is to come, the children that come.

Children are not one's own, I realized; they are God's; but you cannot send them off to scatter around the island with no one to take responsibility. So there was this thing of having a couple in a marriage blessed by Him so that they would take care of those children. When he is all grown, he is a man, and so he can form things. But I have learned that when one sees a thing for the lack of a woman, because women are the ones who run the house, they are the ones who have the discipline to educate the children and to uphold the morals at home. This is woman's role in the home, as I have read it in the Bible. But I am only talking about what I have read because in the old days there was none of this. Say someone wanted to go with another woman back then, he would just go and leave his wife. There was not this responsibility and nobody meddled with it. Men sometimes had the freedom to go off with another woman back then; he would get the idea and off he would go. (Male)

It must be recognized that even though the Church influenced changes in behavior, it was sometimes a positive thing when it meant the protection of people's rights as it relates to the safety of women and children and to many forms of aggression. The Catholic Church, through Father Sebastián Englert, was successful in maintaining the knowledge of the ancestral culture through an exhaustive project of compilation of information. Paradoxically, while he busied himself with the investigation, people listened to the words from the pulpit and, in a certain way, left their traditional behavior by incorporating foreign ways despite the state of isolation that the Rapanui found themselves in during the first half of the century. The impact of outside influence was so great that it affected the communication of the most elderly who were intimidated by the external elements that were being introduced. These elements, however, caused admiration among the great majority.

We cannot see the Church as the only agent of change, but must accept that the process of acculturation started with the arrival of the first navigators in the eighteenth century, and was encouraged by the islanders' attitude of openness toward the unknown, the foreign.

DREAMS AND MEMORIES

In general, all the persons interviewed have a longing for the past, family life, and toward all the period's customs relating to subsistence activities, but without ignoring some positive aspects of modernity. When the informants were asked about their dreams, they evoked aspects of the past:

Going to Poike or to Maunga Terevaka. Once I went there to look around the island; then, I went to the edge of the ravine to look, but while I was looking, the water was yellow with a *nanue para* (yellow fish) that looks like the peel of a banana or orange. Seeing that cave at Ana Heu Neru...What else? That is all. Going around the island in a boat. I remember looking at the fishermen in the boat; that was nice. Also, going to dive for fish next to the boat and seeing a shoal of fish and a *nanue para*. (Female)

I would have liked to sing, to get together with a group of children, with Mama Rari, because she always got together, because Mama Rari's father was the son of my grandmother, because my grandmother always went there. She lived with her daughter one week, two weeks, then moved on; she visited her son, came here because Mama Rari's mother is my father's sister, Maria Luisa. Old Domingo, too. I like to sing so much. When there was singing, people told stories listened well. I always had a very good memory; I never forgot things. I remembered a lot from when I was a child, a very small child. I remember once, when it was raining, I went out with my mother to look for firewood and went back home. I was really little with no clothes, just a little shirt, nothing else. I came home wet, and my mother dried it. She put a shirt on me made of a flour sack; I'll always remember that because I was little at that time, like about four. (Male)

CONCLUSION

Many of the behavioral characteristics of Rapanui society of the period analyzed have lasted to this day, but due to the enormous influence of the outside world, it is difficult to determine what is strictly traditional and that which has been incorporated. The three segments of this study of the women in Rapanui society included the work of interpreting legends, as discussed in Arredondo 2000a and how women were observed by outsiders in Arredondo 2000b.

The importance of hearing the actual voice of island women (and in some cases, men) who lived through the earlier days of Rapanui society provides us with a glimpse of what the society's real changes have been since the beginning of this century.

NOTES

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owner of the Aukara Art Gallery in Hangaroa village. Her research has been published in many books and journals.

This paper was written in the context of a research project on gender relations on Easter Island in 1996 and 1997. The research was made possible by Grant #1960146 of the Chilean financing agency, Fondecyt (Fondo para el Desarrollo de la Investigación Científica y Tecnológica). Co-researchers on this project were anthropologists Riet Delsing and Eliana Largo. This article, the third in a series of gender relations in Rapanui society, covers the period from 1919 to today, and includes life stories of various informants. Part 1, Women in Myths and Legends *Rapa Nui Journal*, Vol. 14(2):42-46, 2000. Part 2, Rapanui Women as Seen Through the Eyes of Seafarers, Missionaries and Scientists in the Eighteenth Century was published in *Rapa Nui Journal*, Vol. 14(3):80-84, 2000.

² The Williamson-Balfour Company was involved in the export-import business and their interest in wool was significant for the development of Easter Island. By 1898 Williamson-Balfour formed the Compañía Explotadora de la Isla de Pascua (CEDIP). Islanders were forced to live in Hangaroa and were forbidden access to the rest of the island, which was turned into one great sheep ranch.

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A group of women and children photographed on Easter Island in 1911 by H. P. Edmonds (collection of Carolyn and Mark Blackburn).